

I. INTRODUCTION - SUMMARY

Jamaica Plain
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The Jamaica Plain - Parker Hill Planning District contains approximately 1,960 acres of land. The southern third contains predominantly single family and owner-occupied structures of relatively high values. The north-eastern corner contains two large housing projects and the areas around them are more racially mixed than any of the rest of Jamaica Plain. This also is an area of increasing Spanish speaking population. The remainder (the northwest corner and central third) is an area of mostly older structures, many double and triple deckers and large, old Victorian houses served by several older, commercial areas on major streets. Within this area there has been an increase of the 20-24 year old population in the northern corner while the central third has a larger proportion of elderly than the remainder of the area.

The only areas which cannot be used for residential purposes are the Jamaica Pond - Olmstead Park section along the western, Brookline border and the Arnold Arboretum in the southwest corner. On the east, Jamaica Plain borders Washington Park-Model Cities, on the southeast and south it borders Roslindale and West Roxbury, while on the north it borders with the Fenway - Kenmore district.

The total population of Jamaica Plain has been decreasing since 1950 when it was 58,015.

Table 1. Total Population Changes: 50 - 60 - 70, Jamaica Plain and City

	1950	50-60 % Change	1960	60-70 % Change	1970	50-70 % Change
Jamaica Plain P.D.	58,015	- 7.7	54,568	-10.8	47,767	- 17.6
City Total	801,444	--12.9	698,081	- 8.2	641,071	- 20.0
% of City Total	7.2		7.7		7.5	

Despite the loss of 17.6% of its population Jamaica Plain contains approximately the same proportion of the city's population as it did in 1950. The rate of decline in Jamaica Plain was smaller than that of the city from 1950-1960, but larger than the city's from 1960 to 1970.

During the same period housing units increased 9% to 17,093.

Table 2. Total Housing Units Changes: 50-60-70, Jamaica Plain and City

	1950	50-60 % Change	1960	60-70 % Change	1970	50-70 % Change
Jamaica Plain P.D.	15,628	4.3	16,303	4.8	17,093	9.4
City Total	222,079	7.5	238,816	- 2.7	232,448	4.7
% of City Total	7.0		6.8		7.4	

Consequently, the number of persons per housing unit has decreased from 3.7 in 1950 to 2.8 in 1970 in Jamaica Plain and from 3.6 to 2.7 in the City as a whole.

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Table 3 shows that the population density has decreased at about the same rate as the city but always remaining above the city level. The density of housing units has been steadily increasing unlike the city, where the density of units has remained generally constant.

Table 3. Number of Persons and Housing Units Per Acre: 50-60-70

	<u>1950</u>	<u>1960</u>	<u>1970</u>
J.P. Pers./Acre	29.60	27.84	24.37
City Pers./Acre	24.55	21.38	19.64
J.P. H.U./Acre	7.97	8.31	8.72
City H.U./Acre	6.80	7.31	7.12

II. STATISTICAL DATA

A. POPULATION

1. AGE GROUPS

In the past ten years in Jamaica Plain the proportion of people in the age groups over 60 and 20-24 have noticeably increased. The percent over 60 (19.6%) is now greater than the comparable figure for the city (17.0%).

Table 4. Percent of Population in Various Age Groups.

Age (years)	J.P.-1960		J.P.-1970		City 1960		City 1970	
0-14	14,363	26.8	11,645	24.4	171,812	24.7	152,681	23.9
15-19	4,629	8.6	4,388	9.2	51,989	7.4	61,060	9.5
20-24	3,884	7.2	5,642	11.8	54,547	7.8	77,103	12.0
25-59	21,313	39.8	16,767	35.1	297,234	42.5	237,611	37.1
60-over	9,379	17.6	9,306	19.6	122,499	17.6	112,467	17.5
Total	53,568	100.0	47,767	100.0	698,081	100.0	641,071	100.0

People in the age groups 0-14 and 35-54 have decreased in Jamaica Plain much as they did in the city as a whole. The only groups to increase in absolute size were 20-24 yr. olds and people over 75.

Although maps #1 and #2 show that, with one exception, areas with high proportions of elderly do not have high proportions of twenty to twenty four year olds, Table 5 show that only in tract 810 which had the largest proportionate increase, was there a decrease in the percent of elderly, and this was less than two percentage points.

Table 5. Percent Elderly and 20-24 yr. olds in Census Tracts with high Proportion of 20-24 year olds in 1970: 60,70

	1 9 6 0					1 9 7 0				
	Total	#20-24	%20-24	#65-over	%65-over	Total	#20-24	%20-24	#65-over	%65-over
nsus act	Pop.	24	24	over	over	Pop	24	24	over	over
8 (S2)	3,640	226	6.2	502	13.8	2,864	219	7.6	462	16.1
9 (S6)	3,578	243	6.7	463	12.9	3,210	578	17.0	415	12.9
0 (S5)	5,602	671	11.0	653	11.7	5,068	1,599	25.0	521	10.3
1 (S4)	3,877	300	10.4	666	17.2	2,954	549	18.0	537	18.2

In the three census tracts with the highest proportions of elderly there have been both percentage and absolute increases. The cause for these increases is not necessarily immigration, there were sufficient people age 55-64 in 1960 to create this increase in absolute numbers assuming normal attrition of all persons 55 and over in 1960. This was not true for 20-24 year old; net immigration was necessary to cause the growth of this group.

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2. RACIAL CHARACTERISTICS

In 1970, 84% of the residents of Jamaica Plain were white, while the city as a whole was 81.9% white.

Table 6. Racial Characteristics of Jamaica Plain - 1970

	Total Pop.		White		Negro		All others	
J.P.	47,767	100%	40,120	84.0%	6,838	14.4%	744	1.6%
City	641,071	100%	524,588	81.9%	104,635	16.7%	11,649	1.8%

There has been a gradual increase since 1950 in the size of the non-white population and its proportion of the district's total population (1950, 60, and 70 over 90% of the non-white were Negroes.)

Table 7. Changes in Jamaica Plain's Non-White Population '50-'60-'70

1950			Absolute	1960			Absolute	1970		
Total	Non-White		Change '50-60	Total	Non-White		Change '60-70	Total	Non-White	
58,015	546	0.94%	2,134	53,568	2,680	5.0%	4,948	47,767	7,628	16%
801,444	42,744	5.3%	25,730	698,081	68,504	9.8	47,830	641,071	116,334	18%

However, a much larger proportion of the 1970 Negro population had lived in their unit for 5 years or more than of the 1960 Negro population. This indicates the increase in the Negro population is leveling off.

Map 3A shows the Jamaica Plain black population is not evenly distributed throughout the district. The two areas of highest concentration are public housing projects. The black population contains a much higher proportion of children and a much lower proportion of elderly than the total population.

Table 8. Age Distribution of Negro and Total Population in Jamaica Plain

	0-14		15-24		25-34		35-64		65 +		Total	
Negro Pop.	3,235	47.1	1,303	19.0	830	12.1	1,225	17.8	273	4.9	6,884	100.0
Total Pop.	11,645	24.4	10,030	21.0	5,766	12.1	13,426	28.1	6,381	14.4	47,767	100.0

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3. HOUSEHOLD DESCRIPTION

The distribution of household sizes is very similar to that of the city.

Table 9. Distribution of Household by Size in Jamaica Plain and in the City.

	Total	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8 Or
	Occ. Units	Pers.	Pers.	Pers.	Pers.	Pers.	Pers.	Pers.	More
#	15,894	4,214	4,728	2,632	1,779	1,026	635	437	443
%	100.0	26.5	29.7	16.6	11.2	6.5	4.0	2.7	2.8
#	217,471	62,952	62,202	32,854	23,736	15,005	9,298	5,646	5,763
%	100.0	28.9	28.6	15.1	10.9	6.9	4.3	2.6	2.7

Several block groups, however, have a considerably larger proportion of one and two person households than the district as a whole. All of the block groups are located in the northern third of the district.

4. OVERCROWDING

Overcrowding is no more serious a problem in the district as a whole than it is in the city.

Table 10. Overcrowding Units in Jamaica Plain

	Total Occ. Units	Units with 1.01-1.50 Persons/Room	Units with 1.51 or more Person/Room
J.P.	15,894	923 6.1%	282 1.8%
City	217,478	12,585 5.8%	3,927 1.8%

However, Map 6 shows that there are three specific areas of more serious overcrowding; from north to south, one is composed primarily of public housing, one is partially composed of public housing, and the last contains no public housing. The areas between these three sections have average overcrowding while the remainder has much less than average overcrowding. In all but one of the census tracts with average or above average overcrowding the proportion of occupied units which were overcrowded has decreased since nineteen sixty. The one (1205) with a higher proportion than in 1970 actually has 9 fewer overcrowded units in 1970.

Table 11. Overcrowding, 60-70 in Selected Jamaica Plain Census Tracts

act #	1960			1970		
	Total Occ. Units	Units with more than 1.01 pers./room		Total Occ. Units	Units with more than 1.01 per/rm.	
09 (S6)	1,103	109	9.8%	1,201	77	6.4%
10 (S5)	1,663	110	6.6	1,918	121	6.3
11 (S4-)	997	97	9.7	945	58	6.1
12 (V2)	1,687	292	17.8	1,424	243	17.0
202 (V2)	1,261	132	10.4	1,465	119	8.2
204 (V5)	2,319	163	7.0	2,397	117	4.5
205 (V3)	929	107	11.5	776	98	12.6

5. HOUSEHOLD TYPES

Jamaica Plain has a larger proportion of female headed households than the city as a whole. Map 3 shows that the areas with the highest proportions of female headed households are the two large public housing projects, and these families are disproportionately black. In the other areas where these households are concentrated they are mostly white.

Table 12. Female Headed Households in Jamaica Plain

	Heads of Hus.-wife Hshld.		Females head of Hshld.		All other perc
J.P.	7,026	(14.7%)	2,959	(6.2%)	37,782 (79.1)
City	102,120	(15.9%)	31,905	(5.0%)	507,046 (19.2)

6. PERCENT OF FAMILIES WITH LESS THAN \$5,000/YR. INCOME

Jamaica Plain has a higher proportion of families earning less than \$5,000 per year than the city as a whole; 18.6% in J.P. compared to 16.1% in the city. Census tracts with large public housing projects (103, 203, and 812) have very high (over 40%) proportions of low income families while the rest of J.P. has much lower proportions. The disproportionately large percent of Jamaica Plain housing which is in public housing projects (17% compared to 7% in the city as a whole) may account for the above average percentage of families earning less than \$5,000/year.

7. PERCENT OF INCOME SPENT ON RENT

Only in the two census tracts which contain primarily public housing units (803,812) do fewer than 60% of the households with less than \$5,000 income spend 25% or more of that income on rent. In the remainder of the northern half over 90% of such households spend more than 25% on rent while in the southern half 80-90% of such households pay in excess of 25%. Among all renter households, those which spend more than 35% on rent are also concentrated in the northern half of the district.

8. MOBILITY

Thirty percent or less of the households in the northern half of Jamaica Plain moved into their May, 1970 housing units before 1965 while 50% or more of the households in the southern half moved in before 1965. Furthermore, in the northernmost part of the district (north of Parker Hill) more than 30% of the households had moved into their unit during 1969 or the first four months of 1970. Clearly, the northern half of the district is much less stable than the southern half.

B. HOUSING

1. UNIT SIZE

The housing stock of Jamaica Plain is composed of units which on the whole have more rooms than the stock of the City. Table 12 shows that a majority of the units in Jamaica Plain have 4 or 5 rooms, and there are more units with 6 or more rooms (25%) than there are with 3 or less (21.6%). Neither of these conditions exist in the City as a whole.

Table 12. Number of Rooms in Housing Units in Jamaica Plain

	<u>Total H.U.</u>		<u>1,2,3 Rm. U.</u>		<u>4,5 Rm.Units</u>		<u>6 & Rm. Units</u>	
J.P.	17,093	100.0%	3,695	21.6%	9,108	53.3%	4,275	25.0%
City	232,448	100.0%	66,569	28.6%	104,571	45.0%	61,104	26.3%

The only pattern which is clear at a block group level is that the southern third of the district, particularly the western section which is composed primarily of single family structures contains almost no one, two or three room units but does contain very large proportions of units with 7 or more rooms. Although some parts of the northern half of the district contain greater proportions of small units than the district as a whole, this pattern is not at all clear cut.

2. TENURE

In 1970, 3,582 or 22.5% of the 15,894 units occupied were owner-occupied. In the City as a whole 27.2% were owner-occupied. In 1960, 3,267 or 22.1% of the 14,785 occupied units were owner-occupied units. Although the owner-renter relationship has remained quite steady for ten years, geographically there is a wide variance among areas within the district. Map 7 shows that the northern third of the district has a proportion of owner-occupants below the district average while the majority of the southern two-thirds is above the average. In almost all cases except areas of overwhelming home-ownership, a majority of the owner-occupied units are in multi-family structures.

3. VALUE OF SINGLE FAMILY

A majority of the single family houses in Jamaica Plain are worth over \$20,000 (844 of 1,486 or 57%) using each owner's estimate of his structure's value. This is not the case for the city, where only 47.5% of the single units are worth over \$20,000. The distribution of single family units has remained relatively constant over the past 20 years, after inflation is accounted for. In 1950 slightly more than one-half (53.4%) of the units were valued over \$10,000 and in 1960 slightly less than one-half (48%) were valued over \$15,000. In these years, the single family housing stock of Jamaica Plain had a significantly higher value than the stock of the city as a whole. In 1950 only 45% of the City's housing stock was valued over \$10,000 and in 1960 only 37% was valued over \$15,000. Houses near Jamaica Pond and in the southwest corner of the district are predominantly worth more than \$20,000. Houses to the east and north of this area are predominantly worth less than \$20,000. (See map #4.)

4. RENT LEVELS

Rent levels are generally lower in Jamaica Plain than in the City as a whole. Fifty-nine percent of the units in Jamaica Plain rent for less than \$100.00; in the city only 51.5% rent for less than \$100.00. The median rent in Jamaica Plain is \$91.51 while the median rent for the city is \$98.00.

Table 13. Number of Occupied Rental Units by Monthly Contract Rent in Jamaica Plain

		\$40-	\$60-	\$80-	\$100-	\$120-	\$150-	\$200-	\$300	
	Total*	59	79	99	119	149	199	299	+	NCR
#	12,161	119	1,101	3,179	2,775	1,536	1,446	1,158	732	115
%	100.0	1.0	9.1	26.1	22.8	12.6	11.9	9.5	6.0	1.0
#	155,772	2,935	14,100	31,154	31,959	23,786	22,940	18,556	7,884	2,398
%	100.0	1.9	9.1	20.0	20.5	15.3	14.7	11.9	5.1	1.5

* Units with no cash rent (NCR) are not included in these totals.

Some of this lower rent phenomenon is attributable to the unusually large proportion of the housing units which are in public housing. Analysis of the data on a block group level shows that the area around the Pond and along the Brookline boundary contains primarily units which rent for more than \$120 while the units in the remainder of the district have considerably, lower rents. (See Map #5.) The four block groups with a majority of the units renting for less than \$80/month either contain large numbers of public housing units or border on such projects.

5. VACANCY RATES

In 1970 there were 1,185 units vacant or 6.9% of the total number of units compared to 6.4% in the city. Of these, 973 were for rent, 21 were for sale or rent as of May 1, 1970. The 973 vacant, for rent units were 7.3% of the total number of units rented or available to be rented. The 21 units for sale constituted .6% of the units owner occupied or available for purchase. When block groups which contain major family public housing are removed from the rental totals the rental vacancy rate drops to 4.6%. The vacancy rates in the block groups with major family types public housing project is 16.1%. All but two of the non-public housing block groups (1207-1 and 811-3) which have vacancy rates higher than 4.6% are either adjacent to public housing or the Southwest Corridor. Only one (1205-3) of the block groups which border public housing projects has a vacancy rate lower than 4.6%. The only block group (809-1) which has an unusually high for sale vacancy rate (4.9%) also borders public housing.

6. STRUCTURE TYPES

The majority of units in Jamaica Plain are found in 2-4 unit structures. In the Southwest corner a large proportion of the units are in single family structures. In some parts of the northern third, including of course, census tracts with public housing projects, a majority of the units are in structures with 5 or more units.

PATTERNS

III. COMPARISONS OF HOUSING AND POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS

A. AREAS OF HIGH CONCENTRATIONS OF 20-24 YEAR OLDS.

The area with high proportions of 20-24 year olds have below average and decreasing rates of owner occupancy, above average rents, decreasing numbers of large units as well as a high level of occupant turnover. It has already been noted that, with one exception, areas with high proportions of 20-24 year olds do not have high proportions of elderly. The five block groups with the highest proportions of 20-24 year olds (10-4, 811-1, 809-3, 103-1, and 810-2) all have unusually large (for Jamaica Plain) percentages of small units (1,2, and 3 rooms) and small households (1 and 2 persons). These block groups with high proportions of 20-24 year olds also have well below average rates of owner-occupancy, having decreased as much as 25% in the past decade. Of the eight block groups with the lowest proportions of unit owner occupancy (12.3% or less) five are the block groups with the highest proportions of 20-24 year olds, and two others contain public housing projects. The block groups with high proportions of 20-24 year olds have a quite low proportion of Negroes, and the rent levels are above average. The three block groups with highest proportions of 20-24 years olds are among the six or seven block groups with the highest rent levels in the district. These block groups also are in the area where the percent of households which had recently moved in is highest, the percent of those households earning less than \$5,000 per year that spend more than 25% of income on gross rent is highest.

Although not all of these block groups are deteriorating in condition, none of them are experiencing any significant upgrading. There has, however, been considerable money put into structures for conversion of larger to smaller. In the three census tracts with high proportions of students (809, 810, 811) the proportion of 1,2 and 3 room units has increased very significantly although the total number of units has not changed significantly.

B. AREAS OF HIGH CONCENTRATIONS OF ELDERLY

The four clearest relationship of areas with high proportions of elderly are with low vacancy rates, low proportions of Negroes, high proportions of large housing units and high proportions of home ownership. Only the first two of these are fairly clear cut. It should be noted that there is nothing to prove that the elderly live in the large units or are that they are the reason for the higher owner occupancy rates. The social and housing conditions of the elderly in Jamaica Plain appear to be quite varied. Areas with large proportions of elderly generally have low proportions of Negroes. Most areas of high elderly concentration also have higher than average rates of owner occupancy, but one of the two block groups with 25% or more elderly (811-3) has a considerably lower than average rate of owner occupancy. Of the ten block groups with 18 percent or more elderly nine have rental vacancy rates of 2.8% or less but one (811-3), has a rental vacancy rate of 7.4%. Five of these ten block groups have larger proportions. Similarly, seven of the block groups have unusually large proportions (7.9% - 23.6%) of housing units with eight rooms or more, but three have less than average (5.9%) for the district. None of the block groups with high proportions of elderly have higher than average amounts of overcrowding. There is very little correspondence between block groups with high proportions of elderly and general rent levels, except that none of these block groups are among those with the lowest rent levels, and that the areas of high elderly concentration which border Jamaica Pond or the Jamaicaway have higher rents than the "interior" areas of the district. Since a majority of the "elderly" areas are south of the east-west line formed by Centre and Perkins Streets a majority are in the area of much lower resident turnover.

C. AREAS OF HIGH OWNER OCCUPANCY

The most positive aspects of the areas with high owner-occupancy are the low vacancy rates; the apparent resistance to conversion, and the better situation for low income renters that seems to exist in these areas. The greatest liabilities seem to be the high proportions of elderly and the general condition of structures in the area, which although certainly not bad now, shows small, potentially growing, pockets of decline.

Areas of high owner occupancy show strong, consistent relationships with several other social and housing characteristics. Of 18 block groups with 25% or more of their units owner occupied 15 have higher than average proportions of units with six or more rooms (25% or more). Of these 18, 17 have vacancy rates of 3.6% or less while the district as a whole has a rental vacancy rate of 4.6% when all units in large family, public housing projects are excluded. (With public housing units included the rate is 7.6% for the whole district). Thirteen of these eighteen block groups have above average proportions of households with four to six persons. The other five block groups all have well above average percentages of elderly which may be the cause of the smaller household sizes. (These five block groups have above average proportion of households with 3 persons or less).

There are no block groups with above average proportions of Negroes and above average owner occupancy. In areas of high owner occupancy a smaller proportion of households with less than \$5,000 income spend more than 35% of their income on gross rent. Apparently owner occupants are less willing to charge rents which are a high percent of tenants income than absentee owners, presumably because the owner occupants are more aware of the tenants financial situation and have closer personal relations with them. Other than this there, seems to be no strong relationship between levels of owner occupancy and rent levels except that no areas of above average owner occupancy are among the areas with the lowest rent levels. Areas of high owner-occupancy have much higher proportions of households which are living in the same unit as 1965.

Condition appears to be correlated with owner-occupancy only when structure type is taken into account. In areas of high owner-occupancy and substantial numbers of single family structures condition is good, but in areas where structures with 2-4 units are much more predominant condition is only fair. High owner occupancy rates occur only in areas of lower proportions of families with income less than \$5,000/year but not in all such areas.

D. RELATIONS OF LARGE UNITS AND LARGE HOUSEHOLDS

Areas with large proportions of large units (6 or more rooms) generally are not the areas with large proportions of households with six or more person. There are a few areas where the proportion of households with 6 or more persons was larger than the proportion of units with 6 or more rooms. This is true in all of the block groups with public housing projects and in block groups 1202-3 and 1205-1. There are several other block groups that are almost in this situation, while there are also numerous block groups with more than 3 times as many large units as large households. With adequate redistribution, all large households would be housed adequately (with respect to overcrowding, at least) in existing large structures, if the fiscal problems are overcome.

E. Areas of High and Low Rental Vacancy Rates

Rental vacancy rates in Jamaica Plain are related to a few variables in a fairly strong manner. All of the areas with low rental vacancy rates contain single family structures which are above the district average value. In fact, only one of the 10 block groups which have above average values of single family houses does not have extremely low vacancy rates, (all ten of these significant numbers of rental units). The areas of lowest vacancy rates all have well below average overcrowding and above average owner occupancy. None of these block groups have the lowest rent levels in the area.

Conversely, all but one of the block groups with the lowest rent levels have high vacancy rates. Also, the block groups with high vacancy rates are among those with higher than average proportions of blacks, an insignificant number of single family houses, below average owner-occupancy, and fair to poor or poor building conditions. These high vacancy areas have higher than average recent turnover.

Areas with high vacancy rates appear to be less stable, in poorer condition, suffering from overcrowding, bordering or containing large public housing projects, and suffering from other blighting factors such as the southwest corridor and institutional land banking. Areas with low vacancy rates have significant numbers of above-average-value single family homes, moderate to above average rent levels, do not border on public housing projects, are in relatively good condition, and do not suffer from any other blighting factors.

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F. Areas of Above Average Overcrowding

Areas with unusually high overcrowding exhibit several expected characteristics. These areas have much larger than average proportions of households with 6 persons or more, well below average rent levels, and somewhat below average levels of income. These areas also are among those with the poorest building conditions. Apparently, these households are attempting to maximize their disposable income after housing costs and accepting overcrowded conditions in return since there are other areas which have much larger supplies of large units but for higher rents. (Two of the most serious areas of overcrowding are in large public housing projects where rents are much lower than in the private market, but the rent levels for large units in the other overcrowded areas seem to be lower than in other areas of Jamaica Plain.

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the great level plain

G. Areas with High Percent of Income Spent on Rent

The areas where the proportion of households spending more than 35% of income on gross rent is highest are the areas where 20-24 yr. olds are most concentrated and there is a high turnover rate. These areas are also the same areas where the proportions of households with less than \$5,000/yr. income that pay more than 25% of income on rent are greatest. There is very little correspondence with other financial or social characteristics. Areas which do not have high proportions of 20-24 yr. olds do have high proportions of households with six or more persons.

The areas in which relatively small proportions of the households with income less than \$5,000/yr. that spend more than 25% on rent both contain large public housing projects. In the rest of Jamaica Plain there is very little variation; 80% or more of the low income households spend 25% or more on rent. In areas where owner occupancy is higher, the percentage is somewhat lower than in areas with lower owner occupancy.

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1. The first of these is the
fact that the law is not
the same in all cases. It
varies according to the
circumstances of the case.
2. The second is that the
law is not the same in
all cases. It varies
according to the
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